It’s back to school in Southern Maryland

Posted by TBN Editor  On  09/05/2017

Mutual Elementary School Principal Donna House with students on the first day of the new school year

Port Republic, MD - For the first time in two generations, public school children throughout Maryland are returning to school post-Labor Day. The start of school after the holiday came about by an executive order from Maryland Governor Larry Hogan last summer. While the move was criticized by the state’s teachers’ union, many have embraced the call as sound economic policy, giving tourist destinations like Ocean City a boost in added revenue.

“This is going to be fun,” declared a Mutual Elementary School (MES) staff member as students emerged from buses and carpools and marched through the doors for day one. Principal Donna House greeted students and allayed some of the fears of a few nervous kindergarteners.

The first day of school is a transition time for students, parents, teachers and administrators. It’s also a time when bus drivers take on arguably the most important missions of the mornings and mid-afternoons. The National Safety Council (NSC) reminds motorists that if you are driving behind a school bus, allow a greater following distance than if you were driving behind another car. It will give you more time to stop once the yellow lights start flashing. Remember, if the bus’s yellow or red lights are flashing and the “stop” arm is extended, traffic must stop. Motorists should always be alert when school is in session, especially in school zones. The NSC advises that “children often are unpredictable and they tend to ignore hazards, and take risks.”

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